IT Program Assessment
A&O- Mission Systems (2010)

Review

The DHS CIO conducted a comprehensive IT program review of the A&O - Mission Systems Program on 21 May, 2010. The Office of Operations Coordination and Planning (OPS) Mission Systems (MS) Program provides strategic and tactical operational capabilities and infrastructure to DHS OPS, the Network Operations Center (NOC), and other mission partners. The MS Program provides the infrastructure and display capabilities for collection, storage, production, display, and dissemination of situational awareness information. OPS is the primary national-level hub for situational awareness, operational information and communications pertaining to domestic incident management.

Major findings from the review include the following:

- The program's objective is to provide an unfiltered Internet connection (known as the D-LAN) for services and mission partners (Interagency, State, etc.) that cannot operate on DHS' unclassified network due to technical or operational constraints.
- The program is currently in an Operations and Maintenance lifecycle phase receiving less than $10M in annual funding.
- The program's business need articulation is not contained in a singular document, but rather, is derived from a conglomeration of capital investments (Exhibit 300s and Exhibit 53s) from across and beyond the Enterprise.
- D-LAN is a service that supports a number of functions across the Enterprise such as COOP, DSAT, RCT, SVTC, Conference Bridges and Traffic Land.
- D-LAN also features a VSAT capability as a result of lessons learned from prior disaster response
- The Briefing Display System (BDS), which is a large display that allows NOC personnel to view the common situational awareness information, is currently being evaluated to determine if it meets the requirements to be classified as a "system".
- The program has a cost sharing model developed and implemented which defrays operational cost.

Assessment

The A&O- Mission Systems program is operationally well-managed given the atypical program character. It is recommended that the PMO work towards a more precise articulation of the mission need and business case for such an important capability. In addition, it had been asked that the PMO continue to explore alternatives to the current Briefing Display System to determine if functionality might be acquired at a greatly reduced cost. Cost efficiencies may also be found in forthcoming technology refreshes. The scoring below is reflective of the risks involving ongoing security, technical, and cost issues of the BDS, along with addressing security issues with the D-LAN.

Score: 3